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PEEPS AT MANY LANDS

SCOTLAND

BY

ELIZABETH GRIERSON

AUTHOR OF

"THE CHILDREN'S BOOK OF EDINBURGH," ETC.

WITH TWELVE FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS
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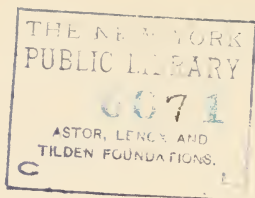
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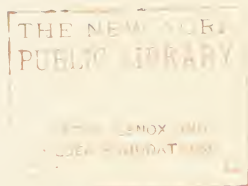
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SCOTLAND

CHAPTER I

THE LAND OF THE THISTLE

A LITTLE boy was once asked to write an essay on Scotland, and he began by saying "Scotland is the smallest half of England." I should not wonder if this sentence lost a mark for him, yet I think we can all understand what he meant by it.

He knew that England and Scotland are parts of the same island, and that nowadays they form one Kingdom, inhabited by the same people, who speak the same language, have the same Parliament, and obey the same King ; and that, when we cross the Border and go from Scotland into England, or from England into Scotland, we do not need to get out of the train and have our boxes opened and searched for certain things that are not allowed to be carried from one country to another unless a tax is paid on them, as is done when travellers go from France into Germany, or from Italy into France.

So when he said that "Scotland is the smallest half
sc. I I

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of England," he was only trying to explain that, although we always think of England and Scotland as two separate countries, they are not two separate Kingdoms, and that Scotland is smaller than England.

All the same, it was rather an unfortunate way of putting it, and I expect, if the little boy were English, and if he had any Scotch schoolfellows, they gave him rather a hard time of it in the playground when they got out of school.

For, although Scottish people are glad to belong to the "United Kingdom," as it is called, of Great Britain and Ireland, and so to form part of the vast Empire over which King Edward reigns, they like always to remember that their little northern land has a history of its own, quite apart from that of England, and that many quaint old national customs still cling to it, although they are fewer now than they were fifty years ago.

It is little more than 300 years since the two kingdoms of England and Scotland were joined together,* and before that they did not love each other at all. Indeed, they were bitter enemies, and the smaller and poorer Kingdom of Scotland, instead of looking to its richer sister for help and succour, as might have been expected, turned for sympathy to far-away France whenever it got into difficulties.

And so it comes about that even to this day we use words in Scotland which are really French, and which are not used in England. For instance, we go to the butcher's and buy a "gigot" of mutton, or to the

* 1603.

The Land of the Thistle

china merchant's and buy an "asht" to put the "gigot" of mutton on at dinner-time ; or we talk to some old woman and ask her how her garden is getting on, and she tells us that she has "a fine crop of 'grossarts' this year." If you look up the derivation of these words in a dictionary, you will find that they are just French words, spelt a little differently—*gigot*, *assiette*, *groseille*—and that these French words mean exactly what our Scotch words do.

When we first read about this little northern country, we find that it was not called Scotland at all, but Caledonia, and it was a very wild and inaccessible region indeed. Part of it was covered by an immense forest, in which lived all kinds of wild animals—bears, wolves, boars, and droves of savage white cattle, which were so fierce that they were almost as much to be dreaded as the bears and the wolves.

Indeed, the country was so wild and inaccessible that the Romans, who, as you know, invaded England in 55 B.C., and gradually overran the whole of that country, never settled down to live in the Highlands of Scotland at all, but contented themselves with building a wall between the Forth and the Clyde, and taking possession of the region which lay to the south of that.

I need not tell you how this northern land gradually changed its name from Caledonia to Scotland, which means "the land of the Scots." You know that there were two wild and savage tribes who inhabited the country north of the Roman wall—the part that we call the Highlands. These were the Scots, who came from Ireland, and the Picts, or "painted men." And

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you know also that gradually the Scots conquered the Picts, until at last a Scottish King, Kenneth MacAlpine, became King over the whole country, which soon became known as Scotland.

That was nearly eleven hundred years ago, and Kenneth MacAlpine seems a very shadowy figure to us—indeed, he would not seem real at all, were it not that we can go into Westminster Abbey, when we are in London, and look at the great Coronation Chair, in which good Queen Victoria, and King Edward sat, when they were crowned, and there we see, forming the seat, as it were, of the chair, a rugged piece of stone. That is the “Lia Fail,” or “Stone of Destiny,” which was brought over from Ireland to Iona when the first King of the Scots was crowned on Scottish soil, and when Kenneth became King of the whole of Scotland he had it brought to Scone, and was crowned on it there. It was carried to England in 1296 by King Edward I., and forms part of the Coronation Chair in which all the English Monarchs have been crowned since that day.

We know very little about the reigns of the fifteen Kings who succeeded Kenneth MacAlpine. They seem to us like people walking in a mist. Sometimes the mist lifts a little, and we see one King defending his country from the fury of the Danes, and another waging deadly warfare against the Norsemen; but no figure stands out clearly until we come to Malcolm Canmore, he who wedded the English Princess Margaret, who became our Scottish Saint. From his time forward, however, the history of our Scottish Monarchs stands out clear and distinct. We can trace their lives down

The Land of the Thistle

the centuries, from Greathead, and David the "Sair Sanct," to William the Lion, and Robert the Bruce, on to the House of Stuart;—to James of the Fiery Face, and James of the Iron Belt, to the lovely ill-fated Mary, Queen of Scots, and her son, James VI., who became King of England as well as of Scotland. After that we have no longer separate Kings of England and Scotland, but one King over both; and, with one King over them, the two countries have gradually become so much alike in many ways, and have so many interests in common, that it is difficult for us to realize nowadays that they were ever apart.

But, although Scotland has ceased to be a separate Kingdom, it still possesses its own distinctive emblems of sovereignty—its "Honours," as the people used to call them in old days. They can be seen by all comers up in the Crown Room of Edinburgh Castle. There, in a glass case, protected by strong iron bars, is the Royal Crown of Scotland with which all these old Kings were crowned, and the Sword of State, and the Royal Sceptre. Then, although it has a share in the Union Jack, the flag that waves over all British people, and which, as you know, is made up of St. George's Cross for England, St. Andrew's Cross for Scotland, and St. Patrick's Cross for Ireland, it has its own Royal Standard as well. You know it, do you not?—a yellow flag with a red lion emblazoned in the centre of it.

It has its own badge also, and I do not think I need tell you what that is, for the badges of the United Kingdom are known all over the world. The rose for Merrie England, the leek for gallant little Wales, the

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shamrock for the Emerald Isle, as Ireland is often called, and the thistle for Bonnie Scotland. It has its own patron saint, St. Andrew, and its own proud motto: "Nemo me impune lacessit" — "No one hurts me with impunity."

CHAPTER II

ITS HIGHLANDS

THERE are two words—the "Highlands" and the "Lowlands"—which are very often used when people are talking or writing about Scotland, and it is quite easy to know what these two words mean.

The "Highlands" is that part of the country where the land is thrown up into high hills and mountains, while the "Lowlands" is just where the land is low and fairly level.

If you take a map of Scotland and draw a line from the Firth of Clyde slantwise across Perthshire, following the line of the Grampian Mountains, and then striking northward to the shores of the Moray Firth, you will mark off roughly the Highlands from the Lowlands, and you will see that the Highlands (which lie to the north of your line) take in that part of the country which is all cut up by the sea, and which is full of mountains and lochs, and includes the numerous islands which lie round the west coast.

And it is this that makes the Highlands so famed for their beauty, because, as you can see, the scenery is so

Its Highlands

varied. There are so many tongues of land, with blue arms of the sea running up between them, and narrow valleys, and deep lochs, and swift-flowing rivers, fed by thousands of burns that come tumbling down the steep mountain-sides. Away out in the sea, too, are hundreds of islands, some of them so small that not even a sheep can live on them, and some of them so large that there are villages, and even towns upon them.

As a general rule, we find that the Highlands are very thinly populated—that is, there are not many people living there; and as one drives through the country one sees very few houses, only a little thatched cottage on the hill-side here and there, and now and then one passes a little village, or “clachan,” standing down in some lonely glen.

The reason of this is that the soil in the Highlands is neither so rich nor so deep as it is in the Lowlands, because, instead of being stretched out in great level fields, where manure can be laid on it, it is sprinkled over the sides of the mountains, which are very rocky, so people cannot plough it, and grow wheat and barley on it, and it is used for pasturage for sheep, or more often for deer forests and grouse moors, which you will read about later on. So there are not so many people needed to work on the land in the Highlands as are needed in the Lowlands.

Then, very few of the common industries are carried on in the Highlands, for there are not many railways there, and it is much more convenient to have mills and foundries and engineering works down in the Lowlands, where there are plenty of railways, and it is

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easy to get large supplies of coal with which to drive the engines and machinery.

So the Highlanders have to find employment as gamekeepers, or ghillies, or fishermen, or they farm little patches of land which belong to them, which are called "crofts"; and I am afraid that when they do this they sometimes find it very hard to live, for the crops which they manage to raise are poor, and there are not very many good markets at which they can sell their handful of sheep, or tiny droves of cattle.

CHAPTER III

ITS HIGHLANDS (*continued*)

IF you went up into the Highlands there are three things that would strike you at once. One would be the language of the people; the next, their dress; and the third, their names.

If you spoke to two or three shepherds walking along the road, or went up to a group of children and asked them a question, they probably would answer you in English, for English is taught in all the schools nowadays; but if you heard them talking to one another, you would not be able to make out a word they said, unless you had learned Gaelic; for that is the language of the Highlands, and long ago the people talked Gaelic, and nothing else.

"But why did the Highlanders talk Gaelic and the Lowlanders English?" I hear some of you ask.

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Its Highlands

Well, the answer to that question is a long one, too long to answer properly here ; but if you begin to read about it you will find that the people in the Highlands are what are called Celts—they are descended from Celtic races, who spoke a language of their own—while the Lowlands are inhabited by people who are descended from the Anglo-Saxons and the Scandinavians, whose language was more or less the same as that spoken in England.

Then you would notice the Highland dress. I need hardly describe it to you, for you have all seen it, either worn by someone, or in a picture.

The short kilted skirt, which is made out of a long piece of tartan plaid, pleated or kilted into a band, which gives its name, "the kilt," to the whole dress; the furry sporran, or purse; the short stockings, showing the bare knees; and the little jacket, with the plaid, made of the same tartan as the kilt, caught up on one shoulder.

And what do you expect every Highlander to be able to do? Play the bagpipes, of course! And what music do you expect every Highland regiment to march to? Again you answer: "The bagpipes, of course!"

I am sure you would feel deeply disappointed if you met a Scottish regiment out marching one day led by a brass band ; for there is only one kind of music that kilted men could march to, and that is the "skirl of the pipes."

The third thing which I think you would notice in the Highlands would be the names of the people : so

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many of them have the same surnames. You would be struck by the fact that in one district almost all the people are called Fraser ; in another, Campbell ; in another, MacDonald ; in another, MacGregor ; and so on.

These are what are called "clan names." At one time the population of the Highlands was divided up into clans, and each clan had its own surname.

The word "clan" comes from a Gaelic word which means "children," and each clan was just like a great family. The chief was its head, and all its members looked up to him and obeyed him, as if he were their father ; and they took his name.

Some of the chiefs took their names from lands, etc., such as the Frasers, the Grants, the Grahams, and in that case their followers were known as Frasers, or Grants, or Grahams also ; but other chiefs simply gave their own name to their clan, with the prefix "mac," which means "son of," added to it.

Thus, if Donald was the first chief's name, his children and his followers were called MacDonald, or "the son of Donald," and that clan came to be known as the clan MacDonald.

These clans were constantly fighting with one another, but if a common enemy threatened them—if the men of the Lowlands or the English, for instance, marched against them—they forgot their own feuds for the time, and banded themselves together to drive back the common foe.

All these clans wore the Highland dress, and each of them had its own tartan, with the colours a little

Its Highlands

differently arranged. You have all seen these different varieties of tartan, some of them made of such dark greens and blues you can hardly distinguish the colours, and others brilliant scarlet, and others, again, nearly white. And if you know the clans to which they belong, you will be able to guess, when you meet anyone wearing a kilt, which Highland family he belongs to.

For even to this day people who are descended from these old Highland families are proud of their descent ; and, no matter where they live—in England, or Canada, or Africa—they like to have kilts, or ties, or rugs made out of their family tartan, and they look up to the head of their clan with a certain respect, although they do not feel called upon to obey him as the clansmen obeyed their chiefs in the olden times.

CHAPTER IV

ITS LAKES, MOUNTAINS, AND RIVERS

I SUPPOSE you have all read in fairy tales of babies who were lucky enough to have fairy godmothers, who dowered them with all manner of good things.

I think Scotland must have had a fairy godmother who gave her three gifts—her lakes, and mountains, and rivers ; for without these she would never have been famed for the beauty of her scenery as she is to-day.

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If you look for a moment at a map of Scotland you will see what a large part of the country is taken up with mountains and high hills, between which nestle a perfect network of lakes, or "lochs," as we call them in the North, with here and there a broad river winding its way through a fertile plain, or "strath," to the sea.

Many of the lochs are fresh-water lochs, but some are what are called "sea lochs"—that is, one end of them opens out into the sea, or opens out into another loch, which in its turn opens out into the sea, so that you could sail up them into the heart of the country.

Most of the lochs on the West Coast are like this—Loch Fyne, for instance. We call it a loch, but it is only a very narrow arm of the sea, which runs right up into Argyleshire, and one can get on a steamer at Glasgow and sail down the Clyde, and round the Kyles of Bute, and up Loch Fyne to Inveraray, where the Duke of Argyll has his castle, without having to cross a single piece of land.

Then a little farther north there are four great lochs—Loch Linnhe, Loch Lochy, Loch Oich, and Loch Ness—which have been joined together by short canals, so that they form a chain right across the country, and we can sail straight from Oban on the west, to Inverness on the east, passing through the most beautiful scenery on the way. High hills covered with bracken and heather rise sheer out of the water on each side of the lochs, and there are plantations of nodding birches, and numbers of little burns running like silver threads down the mountain-sides.

Its Lakes, Mountains, and Rivers

When we take this sail we pass Ben Nevis, which, as you know, is the highest mountain in Scotland.

I cannot attempt to tell you about all the Scottish lochs, for there are hundreds of them, but I must just mention one or two of the best known.

There is Loch Lomond, near Glasgow, which is the biggest fresh-water loch in Scotland. It is thirty-five miles long, and is studded with beautiful islands, and at its head is a mountain called Ben Lomond, which stands like a sentinel keeping guard over the loch that shares its name.

Then, there is Loch Katrine, which lies in a very beautiful part of the country called the Trossachs, which Sir Walter Scott has described in "The Lady of the Lake," and Loch Leven, where Queen Mary was imprisoned in an old castle which stands on an island in the middle of the loch, and from which she escaped with the aid of little Willie Douglas, who, you remember, stole the keys in a napkin when they were lying on the supper-table.

As for the rivers of Scotland, I expect that you know all of them by name.

Their beds are very rocky, and they flow more swiftly than English rivers do, and most of them are full of salmon.

There is the beautiful Tay, which runs past the fair town of Perth, and is perhaps the river that is most noted for its salmon-fishing; and the Dee and the Don, which encircle the granite city of Aberdeen; and the Forth, which winds like a silver serpent on its way past Stirling to the sea; and the Clyde, with its great

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shipbuilding yards ; and the Tweed, which forms part of the boundary between England and Scotland, and flows into the North Sea beside the walls of the ancient town of Berwick-on-Tweed.

CHAPTER V

SOME OF ITS CITIES

Edinburgh

I THINK the first city in Scotland that you would like to visit would be Edinburgh. For one thing, it is the capital of the country, and for another, it is one of the most beautiful and historic cities in the whole world.

I cannot do more than just mention a few of the interesting places to be seen there, for it would take a whole book to describe everything properly to you.

To begin with, it is most picturesquely situated, being quite near the sea, and lying round the base of a high hill, called Arthur's Seat, which is shaped like a couching lion, and looks as if it were keeping watch over the streets and churches and houses on which it looks down.

Then, in the very heart of the city, overlooking some beautiful gardens and a very fine street, called Princes Street, is an old grey Castle, standing high up on a rock, and from this Castle one of the quaintest streets that you can imagine slopes down a hill to an

Some of its Cities

old Palace which stands at the other end of it. This street is lined on each side with tall, narrow houses, some of them eight or ten stories high, and there are narrow wynds and closes running out from it on either side, and almost every stone of it could tell a tale if it could speak ; for there is scarcely a story in Scottish history which was not—in part at least—acted here, and scarcely a man or woman noted in the annals of Scotland who has not walked up and down its uneven pavement, and lodged in one of its houses, or in the old Castle that stands at one end of it, or in the Palace that lies at the other.

I need not tell you the name of that Palace, for it is as well known as the name of the city itself—the Royal Palace of Holyrood.

These two buildings, the Castle and the Palace, with the long street that runs between them, and the wynds and closes that run out of it, together with another old street that runs parallel to it, called the Cowgate, form what is known as the “old town” of Edinburgh, because, up to a hundred and fifty years ago, that was all the town there was, and the ground to the north and south and west, which is now covered with busy streets, was then pleasant green fields and stretches of woodland.

If the “old town” be cramped and small, however, it is full of memories.

Up in the Castle, a part of which is now used as barracks, you will see the old “Royal Lodging,” where the Monarchs of Scotland used to live before their Palace of Holyrood was built, and where they

Peeps at Many Lands

took refuge, even afterwards, when danger seemed to threaten them.

In the Crown Room there, you will see the Scottish regalia—the Crown and Sword and Sceptre, of which I told you in the first chapter. In the same block of buildings there is the room where the little son of Mary, Queen of Scots, was born, the baby who lived to become the King of England as well as of Scotland.

Near by is the banqueting-hall where the “Douglas Black Dinner” was eaten, and the courtyard where the poor young Earl of Douglas and his brother, little Lord David, were so cruelly beheaded.

You will see St. Margaret’s Chapel, too, the oldest building in Edinburgh, which was built by Queen Margaret, wife of Malcolm Canmore, more than 900 years ago ; and the old State prison, where the Earl of Argyle lay down and went to sleep so calmly, although he knew that his head was to be taken off in a few hours.

Then, when you leave the Castle and walk down the High Street, as the upper part of this long street is called, you see in front of you a large Church, with a curious tower of stone, shaped like a crown. This is the ancient Church of St. Giles, which is as full of memories as the Castle or Holyrood.

For there has been a Church here ever since there was any town of Edinburgh at all ; and although the Cathedral Church you see nowadays is not the original Church, which was built of wood, it is very old, dating from long before the Reformation, and it has been a



PRINCES STREET, EDINBURGH

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Some of its Cities

silent onlooker as century after century has passed, and the history of Scotland has been slowly written.

It was inside its walls that the women and children gathered to pray when the terrible tidings were brought of the disaster at Flodden; and the big bell that tolls the hours from its tower is the same "great bell of St. Giles's" that tolled on that sad September afternoon in 1513, to summon all the remaining men of the city—old men and boys they were—to man the walls, in case the victorious English might march northward and menace it.

It was in St. Giles's, too, that Jenny Geddes flung her stool at Dean Hanna's head when he was reading the English Church Service against the wishes of the congregation, who were Presbyterians, and it was in St. Giles's that the "great Marquis of Argyle," and the "great Marquis of Montrose," and the "good Regent Moray," and many other men whom you read about in history, were buried.

A little way below St. Giles's Cathedral the High Street narrows into the Canongate, which runs straight on until it reaches an open square, on the other side of which stands the ancient Palace of the Stuart Kings.

Many memories cluster round it—memories of Margaret Tudor, and Magdalene of France, the fair young "Queen of forty days"—but they all fade before the tragic story of our lovely, fascinating, ill-fated Mary, Queen of Scots, who came here on her return from France, a light-hearted, auburn-haired girl of nineteen, beloved by all her subjects, and who lived here for six years, making so many mistakes and doing

Peeps at Many Lands

so many unwise and foolish things, that, in the end, she was hurried off, one midsummer night, a prisoner in the hands of her enemies, and locked up in Loch Leven Castle.

Everything in Holyrood speaks of Queen Mary. We see the rooms she lived in, the ruined chapel where her unfortunate marriage to Lord Darnley took place, a piece of the stone of the altar before which they knelt to be married, the little closet where she was having supper with her Italian secretary, David Riccio, on the night of his murder, and the exact spot in the room outside where he was stabbed to death.

This only gives you a very small idea of all the old historic things which are to be seen in Edinburgh, and there are a great many modern places of interest as well. There are museums, and picture-galleries, and the University, and the Royal Infirmary. But instead of telling you about them, I would advise you to go to Edinburgh and see them for yourselves.

CHAPTER VI

SOME OF ITS CITIES (*continued*)

Glasgow, Aberdeen, St. Andrews

ALTHOUGH Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland, Glasgow is a much larger city. Indeed, Glasgow is the second largest city in Great Britain, the largest being, as you know, London. It is sometimes called the

Some of its Cities

“commercial capital” of Scotland, because a great deal of business is carried on in it, and its streets are far busier and more crowded than the streets in Edinburgh are.

What helps to make it such a busy city is that it is situated on the banks of the Clyde, which, as you will see from the map, soon widens into a firth. At one time the Clyde was such a very shallow river that no ship of any size could sail up it to Glasgow; but the citizens were quick to see what an advantage it would be if this were possible, so they set to work and spent thousands of pounds in widening the river and in deepening its bed, and now quite large ships from all parts of the world can sail up into the fine docks that lie in the heart of the city.

When this was accomplished it was a splendid thing for the people of Glasgow. It brought prosperity to every one, for, naturally, it is much more convenient for Scotch people to have a big seaport of their own, than to have to depend on Liverpool, and London, and Southampton; and as Glasgow is the only large shipping centre on the west coast of Scotland, a great deal of the trade of the country flows into it.

There are large shipbuilding yards on either side of the river, and if you went for a sail on one of the many pleasure-boats which are constantly passing up and down, you would see great ships being built there, and be almost deafened by the “click clack, click clack” of the riveters’ hammers as they rivet together the iron plates which form the hulls of these vessels.

Glasgow, like Edinburgh, has a Cathedral and a

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University. The Cathedral is very old, and is built on the spot where a holy man called St. Kentigern, or St. Mungo, lived, almost fourteen hundred years ago, and preached to the country-folk who lived round about, and who were all heathen.

Glasgow University stands in a beautiful park, and many celebrated men have studied there. Its students have a chance of trying for a scholarship called the Snell Scholarship, which entitles the winner of it to go to one of the best-known colleges at Oxford, Balliol College. Many lads have taken this scholarship, and gone to Balliol, who have been famous in after-life. I will just mention one of them, whose name you must all have heard—Archibald Campbell Tait, who became Archbishop of Canterbury.

After having had a peep at Edinburgh and Glasgow, we will take a look at Aberdeen.

Do you know what Aberdeen is often called? The "Granite City," because it is built almost entirely of grey granite. Indeed, the very streets are paved with this valuable stone, which makes them look very clean and bright when the sun shines, for you know how granite sparkles in the sunshine.

If Glasgow is built on the banks of one river, Aberdeen lies between two—the Dee and the Don—and on a third side there is the sea, so the Granite City is almost surrounded by water. It is one of the principal fishing seaports in Scotland, and I am sure you would like to go to the market and see the rosy-cheeked, weather-beaten fishwives standing beside their stalls, which are laden with golden piles of "Finnan haddocks,"

Some of its Cities

which get their name from the little village of Findon, a few miles to the south.

The last city I want to tell you about is a very small one, but it is full of memories of the past. It is like Edinburgh—you can read history in its stones; and the history that is written there is chiefly the history of the Church. Indeed, the tiny little city of St. Andrews used to be called the “ecclesiastical capital” of Scotland.

Before the Reformation it was the seat of the Archbishop, and as we walk along its streets we see many things that remind us of the sad quarrels that have taken place in Scotland over religion.

As you all know, St. Andrews stands by the sea, and on the edge of the low cliff on which it is built there are still traces of the first little Celtic church which was erected here, long centuries ago, by the Culdees, the followers of St. Columba.

The Celtic Church was the ancient Scottish Church, and it gave place to the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of the Middle Ages, whose members built a magnificent Cathedral at St. Andrews, which is now a ruin, but enough of which remains to tell us what a splendid edifice it must have been.

Then came the Reformation, when most of the people of Scotland became Presbyterians; but before the change was effected there was bitter strife and cruel bloodshed, and nowhere was the strife bitterer than at St. Andrews.

You have all heard of George Wishart and Patrick Hamilton, who were both burned alive because they

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preached the Reformed faith. We call them martyrs, because they died for their religion, and they both suffered martyrdom here.

Wishart was burned in front of the grim old castle, which stands on a promontory which runs out into the sea, and Cardinal Beaton, who had brought about his condemnation, watched the terrible scene from the walls of the castle. A few days afterwards vengeance fell on the Cardinal, who was murdered in his apartment by Norman Leslie of Rothies, and a small band of his followers.

There is a University at St. Andrews, the oldest University in Scotland, which is composed of three colleges—St. Mary's, St. Leonard's, and St. Salvator's; and it was in front of the ancient college of St. Salvator's that Patrick Hamilton was burned. We can see the exact spot, for it is marked in the pavement by a St. Andrew's cross.

More than a hundred and fifty years afterwards another dreadful crime was committed in the name of religion, but this time the victim was an Episcopalian. He was an old man, an Archbishop—Archbishop Sharpe—and he was driving in his carriage with his daughter across a lonely moor, called Magus Moor, about three and a half miles from the city, when his carriage was beset by a band of desperate men, who wished every one to become Presbyterians, and the helpless old man was dragged out and stabbed to death before his daughter's eyes.

These are grim and terrible memories, are they not? And we are thankful as we walk along the streets of

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the little seaside city that we have learned better nowadays than to kill men because they hold different religious beliefs to what we do; and we feel that the St. Andrews that we know, which is full of students who are attending the University, and golfers who come from all parts to play golf on the beautiful links that run along by the seashore, is a sweeter and happier place than it was in those persecuting times.

CHAPTER VII

SOME OF ITS ASSOCIATIONS

The Borders—Scott's Country

SCOTLAND is a country which is rich in memories of the past, as we have seen when we were talking about Edinburgh and St. Andrews; and now I want to tell you about four bits of country which are as full of associations of their own as are any of the cities I have mentioned.

The first is the "Borders," that part of the country in the south which touches England, and which in the olden days used to be called "the Debatable Land." That meant that the border, or boundary, between the two Kingdoms was not properly fixed, and the King of England might claim a piece of land that the King of Scotland thought was his, and the King of Scotland might do the same by the King of England. And so, because things were never very settled in these parts,

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and men thought they could do pretty much as they liked, a constant warfare sprang up between the families who lived on the English side of the Border and those who lived on the Scottish side.

These families formed great clans, almost like the Highland clans, and every man in the clan rose in arms at the bidding of his chief.

On the Scottish side there were Scotts and Elliots, Armstrongs and Kerrs, and on the English side Dacres and Howards, Percys and Lowthers.

And the warfare which they carried on was not so much honest fighting as something that sounds to us very much like stealing, only in these old "reiving" days, as they were called, people were not very particular about other people's property, and right was very often decided by might.

So when these old Border chieftains found that their larders were getting empty, they sent messages round the countryside to their retainers, telling them to meet them that night at some secret trysting-place, and ride with them into England to steal some English yeoman's flock of sheep.

And, in the darkness, groups of men, mounted on rough, shaggy ponies, would assemble at some lonely spot among the hills, and ride stealthily into Cumberland or Northumberland, and surround some Englishman's little flock of sheep, or herd of cattle, and drive them off, setting fire, perhaps, to his cottage and haystacks at the same time.

The Englishman might be unable to retaliate at the moment, but no sooner were the reivers' backs turned





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than he betook himself with all haste to his chieftain, who, in his turn, gathered his men together, and rode over into Scotland to take vengeance, and, if possible, bring back with him a larger drove of sheep and cattle than had been stolen, or "lifted," by the Scotch.

And so things went merrily on, with raids and counter-raids, and fierce little encounters, and brave men slain. You can read the accounts of many of these raids in Sir Walter Scott's "Border Minstrelsy"—about "Kinmont Willie," "Dick o' the Cow," "Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead," "Johnnie Armstrong," and "the Raid of the Reidswire"—and if you ever chance to be travelling between Hawick and Carlisle you can look out of the window, as the train carries you swiftly down Liddesdale, and people the hill-sides, in your imagination, with companies of reivers setting out to harry their "auld enemies," the English.

A little further north, on the same line of railway, we get into another part of the country, which is full of associations of a different kind; for we pass through Sir Walter Scott's country, which he wrote about, and where he lived, and where, in the ruined Abbey of Dryburgh, on the banks of the Tweed, his body was laid to rest.

Let us get out of the train at Melrose and go and see the grand old Abbey, one of the finest ruins in the United Kingdom. As we walk through the streets of the tiny country town we think of Sir Walter's story of "The Monastery," for "Kennaquhair" was just the name he gave to the little town of Melrose, and the Monastery of St. Mary, where Father Philip, and

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Father Eustace, and stout old Abbot Boniface lived, with its beautiful church, was just the Abbey church of St. Mary at Melrose with the monastery attached to it, the cloisters of which we can still trace.

As we are examining the magnificent ruins we come across a flat gravestone, underneath which, we are told, rest the bones of "the wizard Michael Scott," and as we stand and look down at it we almost forget that Sir Michael Scott of Balwearie was a real man—clever, wise, and good. We only think of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" and the story of William of Deloraine's midnight ride, and we fancy we can see the moonlight streaming in through the great window over our heads, and falling on the old monk and the "stark, moss-trooping Scot" as he opened the grave and took the black spae-book, the "Book of Might," from the dead man's arms, and started back in terror at the frown that crossed the Wizard's still face as he did so.

But if Melrose and its Abbey recall Sir Walter and his writings to our minds, we feel nearer him still when we reach beautiful Abbotsford, the house which he built on the banks of the Tweed, about six miles from Melrose, and go into the very room where he wrote his books, and see his writing-desk and his armchair, and drive through the woods which surround the house, and look at the great spreading trees, hundreds of which he planted with his own hands.

Then, before we leave the district, we must visit the ruins of Dryburgh Abbey, and stand for a moment beside the great-hearted man's grave, feeling that we would like to thank him for all the pleasure he has

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given to thousands of children, and thousands of grown-up people too, by the wonderful romances which he wrote.

CHAPTER VIII

SOME OF ITS ASSOCIATIONS (*continued*)

Culloden Moor and Iona

It is a far cry from the Borders and Abbotsford to the other two places in Scotland whose associations I want you to think of.

One is a lonely moor up in the North, near Inverness, and the other is a tiny wind-swept island lying out in the Atlantic, a mile and a half from the larger island of Mull.

The lonely moor is called Culloden Moor, and a famous battle was fought there—famous, not because of the number of soldiers who took part in it, but because it put an end, once and for all, to the hopes which the Roman Catholic branch of the Stuart family cherished of getting back the British crown.

You have all heard of Bonnie Prince Charlie and how he came to Scotland to try and get back his grandfather's crown, which had been taken from him and given to his daughter (Prince Charlie's second cousin) and her husband.

Prince Charlie landed in Inverness-shire, and as he was young, and good-looking, and had pleasant manners,

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he soon won the hearts of a great many of the Highlanders, who had never taken kindly to the new order of things.

Several of the best-known clans mustered round his banner and followed him south, fighting with him at Prestonpans, near Edinburgh, where he gained a great victory, after which he marched into England.

But just when victory seemed within his grasp he was obliged to retreat, and he and his army were driven back to the North by the Duke of Cumberland. He had no food for his soldiers and no money, and large numbers of them began to desert.

He made a last stand with the few thousand desperate men who still remained faithful to him, on Culloden Moor, but it was all in vain.

The fire from the Duke of Cumberland's guns mowed down the ranks of gaunt, half-starved clansmen, and when the grey spring twilight fell, all hope for the Stuart cause was gone, and Prince Charlie was a homeless wanderer, with a price set on his head. And it was a very big price indeed, for £30,000 was offered to anyone who would betray him. No one was base enough to do so, however, although hundreds of people must have known his various hiding-places.

He wandered about the Highlands for five months, now hiding in one place, now in another, and at last he managed to escape to France, being more fortunate than many of his followers, who were imprisoned, and even put to death, for the share which they had taken in the rebellion.

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The tiny island of Iona holds happier memories, although if you visited it you might think it bleak and uninteresting, for the only things to be seen is a ruined church and some traces of a few rude buildings.

But that church and these rude buildings are the most precious ruins in Scotland, for they mark the place where the light of the Gospel was first kindled in the land.

We can hardly think of Scotland as a heathen country, can we? Yet, so it was, until one day,* almost fourteen hundred years ago,† when a rude cobbie, manned by thirteen men, came sailing across the sea from the West, and headed towards Iona. When its occupants had jumped on shore, and pulled up their boat and made it fast, a great event had taken place in the history of Scotland.

For the leader of that little band of men, who was very tall and had very bright eyes, was a priest named Colum, or Columba, who had crossed from Ireland with his followers in order to preach the Gospel to the heathen people on the adjoining island and tell them about God and about Christ.

He was a missionary, one of the greatest missionaries the world has ever known, and he well deserves the name of "Saint," which has been his all through the centuries that have gone by since then.

He and his monks built a church on the little island,

* May 12, 563.

† About a hundred and fifty years before this date St. Ninian had preached in Galloway, but his teaching had quickly been forgotten.

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and a rude monastery, which consisted, doubtless, of a few poor huts made of wattles, and here they lived, and worked, and prayed, and preached to the people who lived near them.

Gradually St. Columba and his followers went farther and farther from home—first across to the island of Mull, and then to the mainland itself—and wherever they went they preached the Gospel, until at last the whole of the Picts became Christians—in name, at all events—and their King was baptized.

This King made a present of the island of Iona to St. Columba, and gradually the fame of the monastery and of the learning of its inmates spread abroad, and boys of noble birth were sent there to be educated from all parts of Scotland and Ireland, and even from Scandinavia.

A great many more monks joined the community. At one time there were a hundred and fifty of them living under St. Columba's rule at Iona, and they, in their turn, became missionaries, and went forth from the island in little bands to settle in different parts of Scotland and Ireland, and even in Norway, and wherever they went they taught the people about God and about the Bible.

So you see how, in these early centuries, this bleak little island formed the one bright spot amid the ignorance and darkness that covered Scotland, and how men went out from it, carrying the light with them, until in due time it spread everywhere over the land.

St. Columba, the originator of it all, lived and died

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at Iona. He often took long journeys on the mainland—we know that he visited his friend and disciple St. Kentigern at Glasgow—but he loved his island home best, and the church he had helped to build, and the bare little cell, where he slept on the ground with a stone for his pillow, and in which he spent many hours each day copying out the Psalms and Gospels to send with his missionaries to the people who had never seen any part of the Bible before.

At last, one Saturday evening in June, 597, thirty-four years after he first landed in Iona, he was copying out the Psalms, as usual, and as it grew dark he closed the book, saying, "Here I make an end. What follows Baithene will write," Baithene being one of his monks.

His words proved true. It was an end of his work on earth, for on the next day the old man died, passionately mourned by his followers, who loved him dearly.

And it was no wonder that he was beloved, for tradition tells us how kind he was to man and beast, how he ordered his monks to help the poor people among whom they lived, and who must have been almost savages, not only by teaching them about God, but also by "helping them to sew garments, and tending their sick, and helping them in whatever labour they might be in want of," and how he loved all dumb creatures, and nursed and fed the birds that fell exhausted on the shore after their long flight over the sea, until they were strong enough to set out again.

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CHAPTER IX

SOME HOLIDAY CUSTOMS

Hogmanay and New Year's Day

THE great national holiday of Scotland is the "New Year." This does not mean New Year's Day only ; it means the last day of the Old Year as well. When these two days come round, everyone likes to be at home, if possible. The school-children have holidays, and the grown-up sons and daughters who have gone out into the world and are earning their living in other towns will travel long distances in order to "bring in" the New Year at home.

"But surely you do not mean to say that those two days are more important holidays than Christmas Day and Boxing Day?" I think I hear some English child exclaim. But I do. Strange as it may seem, Christmas Day is not a holiday at all in Scotland, except for clerks in banks, and for people living at home who can keep it as a holiday if they like.

If you go along the streets on Christmas Morning you will find that most of the shops are open, and all the mills and factories are working ; and if you take a walk in the country you will see the farm labourers ploughing, or carting stones, just as if it were any other day. This is because, at the Scottish Reformation, it was decided that no day was to be kept as a Holy Day except Sunday ; and it is only little by little that Scottish



BORDER "RIEVERS," SETTING OUT
ON A CATTLE RAID. PAGE 24

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people are beginning to see that it is a right and fitting thing that Christmas Day should be kept as a special day, in remembrance of the Great Gift that came to mankind on the first Christmas Morning of all.

But if the majority of Scottish people treat Christmas Day as an ordinary day, six days later all is changed. Just when English folk are settling down to their everyday work again, after their Christmas festivities, their neighbours over the Border are preparing to "keep their New Year." This begins, as I have said, on Old Year's Day. On that day all the shops are shut, and all factories and mills closed.

Then, when their mothers are busy at home "redding up" the house—scrubbing the floors, and making everything look like a new pin, in preparation for the happy family gatherings which are always held on Old Year's Night and New Year's Day—the children sally out in bands to seek their "Hogmanay," that is, they go round all the houses within reach, expecting that the mistress will give them some small present, generally something to eat.

No one knows exactly what the old word means, but if, as some people think, it comes from a French phrase, "*Au gui l'an neuf*" (To the mistletoe this New Year), which was used in Normandy long ago when people went out to cut mistletoe for decorations, we can trace in it the old connexion between France and Scotland.

Be that as it may, Hogmanay is a delightful day for the children, and as soon as it is light they sally out and go round the country-side in bands, stopping

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at all the houses they pass, and shouting merrily, "Hogmanay ! Hogmanay !" or singing this quaint verse of poetry :

"Get up, goodwife, and shake your feathers,
And dinna think that we are beggars ;
For we are bairns come out to play :
Get up and gie's our Hogmanay."

And it is very seldom indeed that they are disappointed. At this house they each get a halfpenny, at that one a currant scone ; here they get an orange, there they get an apple ; and when, in the "darkening," they trudge home again, very tired but very happy, they carry quite a load along with them.

Now comes the next part of the holiday, which appeals more to the "grown-ups," for the children are generally so tired they are glad to go to bed ; but their fathers, and mothers, and big brothers and sisters, "sit the Old Year out and the New Year in," and probably some neighbour who lives alone comes to keep them company. Sometimes there is quite a party, for, although we talk of "sitting the New Year in," I fancy it is very often danced in, especially in country cottages.

In the towns a great many people go to a midnight Service in church, which is a very good way of bringing in the New Year, for every New Year's Morning is like a milestone in our lives ; and, just as we are coming to it, we want a quiet time in which to think of all the stupid and wrong things that we have done in the past year, and make up our minds to try and do better in the year which we are about to begin.

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As soon as the New Year has really begun, a great many people, instead of going to bed, go out and make calls at their neighbours' houses. This custom is known as "first-footing," because the first person who puts his foot over the threshold of a house on New Year's morning is called a "first-foot." It is not considered lucky for a "first-foot" to come empty-handed, so people take cakes of shortbread or a bottle of wine in their pockets, in order that they may bring good luck, and not bad, to their friends.

All through the hours of New Year's Day this visiting goes on. Every one is astir, calling on one another, and wishing one another a "Happy New Year." Then the day is brought to a close by a merry family party, perhaps at grandfather's or grandmother's, and all the sons, and daughters, and aunts, and uncles, and cousins, and grandchildren assemble to spend a few happy hours together before separating once more for another year's work.

Here again we can trace a connexion between France and Scotland, for New Year's Day in France is spent by every one in calling on their friends and taking them presents, and in the evening large family parties are held, just as they are held in Scotland.

Another great amusement of Scottish lads at New Year time is "guizarding." This is an old custom which closely resembles "mumming" in England, and is the last survival of the custom of masquerading, which dates back to the time of the Romans, who held a great festival to celebrate the turn of the year, which, as you know, comes just before Christmas-time, and

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they used to dress up in all sorts of fantastic garments, and go about the streets in masks, so that no one could recognize them. This, to a certain extent, is just what Scotch lads do when they go guizarding.

They dress up in the funniest clothes they can get hold of, and cover their faces with brown-paper masks, and sometimes they hollow out a turnip and put a candle inside it, then cut out five holes to represent eyes, and nose, and a mouth in the side of it, so that, when the candle is lit, it looks like a fiery face, and they carry these turnips as lanterns.

Thus equipped, they go round all the bigger houses in the neighbourhood, and, if they are allowed, they act a rude play in the kitchen. The story in the play is very like the story of St. George and the Dragon which the mummers in England act, only, instead of St. George, the hero's name is Galashan; and a very valiant hero he is, too, who brings his own doctor with him, in case he is wounded by his adversary.

When the play is over, the guizards are not too proud to accept a "collection" if the audience can be prevailed on to give them one. Then they take up their turnip lanterns again and go merrily off to the next house, where they repeat their performance.

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CHAPTER X

SOME HOLIDAY CUSTOMS (*continued*)

Fastern's E'en and Hallow E'en

I SUPPOSE most of you know when Hallow E'en falls, for a great many of you have ducked for apples and burned nuts on the evening of October 31st, the evening before All Saints' Day.

But you might be puzzled if you were asked when Fastern's E'en falls—in fact, you might be unable to tell anything about Fastern's E'en at all.

It is the old Scotch name for Shrove Tuesday, which is the day before Ash Wednesday, when Lent begins.

As you know, Lent is a time that is set apart by the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches, when people are expected to live soberly, and deny themselves, in remembrance of our Lord's fast in the wilderness, and of all that He suffered in order to make atonement for our sins. And in the Middle Ages there were such strict laws about the keeping of Lent that people looked forward to the time with something like dread, and they said good-bye, as it were, to all the feasting and fun which had gone on, more or less, since Christmas-time, by making the day before Lent began a day of revelry.

They had special food on that day—for one thing, everybody ate pancakes—and they had cock-fights, and masques, and all sorts of sports, and in some places all

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the men and boys joined together and had a splendid game of football.

And it is a very curious thing that, although Presbyterian Scotland no longer keeps Lent, she still clings to her old name for Shrove Tuesday, "Fastern's E'en," which just means "the evening before the fast," and she still marks it in many places by having a special game of football. And this game of football has a special name—"Fastern's E'en ba'"—and it is played in a special manner. It is not played in a field, as ordinary football is played, but in the streets of the town or village, and the two sides are simply two great crowds of men and boys.

Sometimes the men from the east end of a town will play against the men from the west end ; or, as is done at Scone, or was done until recently, the bachelors will play against the married men.

Then the goals are not the ordinary wooden posts with a bar across them, but some set boundary on the outskirts of the town, and each side tries to carry the ball beyond the opposite boundary.

For instance, at Scone the goal which the married men aimed at was a hole dug in an open moor, and when they succeeded in driving the ball into that, they were said to have "hung it," while the bachelors tried to send it right across to the River Tay, and when they had succeeded in plunging it into the water they were said to have "drowned it."

When a "Fastern's E'en ba'" is being played every one has a half-holiday, and crowds of people turn out to watch the fun, with quite as much interest as the

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people can have shown in the olden times when they were having a last day of revelry before the Lenten fast began.

Some eight or nine months after Fastern's E'en comes Hallow E'en (for as Fastern's E'en varies like Easter, it does not always fall on the same date), which is another old festival that is observed with due ceremony in many a Scottish home.

Like Hogmanay, it is more or less a children's festival, when Hallow E'en parties are given, and there is great excitement over ducking for apples and burning nuts.

But our great-grandfathers and grandmothers kept Hallow E'en seriously, for it was thought that on that one night in the year all manner of spirits walked abroad—not only the spirits of dead people, but the spirits of people who were alive. By which I mean that if anyone had an uncle or cousin in India or America, they believed it was possible for his spirit to cross the sea and visit them on that night.

And because of this, the belief arose that on Hallow E'en it was possible to find out what the coming days held in store for any person, if he or she carried out certain very quaint and amusing ceremonies.

For instance, a girl who wanted to know what her future husband would be like would go, blindfolded, out into the garden and pull up the first cabbage-stalk she could find by its root. When she returned to the house she took the handkerchief from her eyes, and examined the cabbage-stalk eagerly.

If it were long and straight, she took it as a sign

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that her husband would be tall and good-looking; if it were little, he would be short of stature; and if it were crooked, he would be deformed. If the root were heavy with earth, he was to be a rich man, and if it were clean, he was to be poor.

Another way of reading the future was to take three dishes, or "luggies," and fill one with clean water, another with dirty water, and leave the third one empty. Then one of the company was blindfolded, and set to dip his or her fingers into one of these dishes.

If the dish of clean water chanced to be hit on, a fair young bride or bridegroom was the fancied reward; if the dirty water were chosen, a widow or widower was in store; and the empty dish meant that the one who touched it was to be an old maid or an old bachelor.

Of course, these customs seem very foolish and superstitious to us nowadays, and people who follow them only do so for fun; but the old people believed in them, because, as I have said, they believed that on that special night there were spirits hovering about everywhere, who might be quite able to reveal the future by such means.

I cannot tell you all the other curious things that were done on Hallow E'en, but I must just mention one more.

It was supposed that if any girl dare go into a room by herself and eat an apple in front of a looking-glass, her future husband would come and peep over her shoulder.

In a well-known poem which he wrote, called "Hallow E'en," Robert Burns draws a very amusing

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picture of a little girl who wanted to try this charm, and yet who was rather afraid to do so. And the poet tells us how she begged her old granny to go with her to keep her company :

“ Wee Jenny to her granny says :
 ‘ Will ye go wi’ me, granny ?
I’ll eat the apple at the glass
 I gat frae Uncle Johnnie.’ ”

Then Burns goes on to tell (you must read it for yourselves) how Jenny’s old granny was scandalized at the idea, and laid down her pipe in great anger, never noticing that a spark from it had set fire to her new apron, and poured out her indignation on poor Jenny’s silly little head, warning her what the consequences might be if she dare do such a thing as meddle with spirits :

“ Ye little skelpie-limmer face !
 I daur you try sic sportin !
As seek the foul thief ony place,
 For him to spae your fortune.
Nae doubt but ye may get a sight,
 Great cause ye hae to fear it ;
For mony a ane has gotten a fright
 And lived and died delceret
 On sic a night.”

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CHAPTER XI

HIGHLAND CROFTERS, AND HOW THEY LIVE

WE have read in the second and third chapters about the Highlands and the great Highland clans: let us now take a peep at a crofter's hut.

There are hundreds of those huts scattered over the Western Highlands and Western Islands. They generally stand on the bare moorland or bleak hill-side, or down by the seashore, far away from a railway or from a town.

So the crofter cannot go very often to shops to buy things, and he has to make his livelihood off what Mother Earth can give him, and turn to account all the materials that lie within his reach.

Therefore, when he builds his hut he has to use the stones from the nearest quarry to build it with. Very likely he has to quarry the stones himself, and when the walls are finished he cannot get a great deal of timber to cover them with, as he would do if he were near a railway-station or a woodman's yard, so he has to get what wood he can, and make a framework of a roof, then gather the heather that grows so plentifully on the surrounding moors, and thatch it, sticking in the bunches of heather so tightly, and fastening it down with ropes so securely, that in the end his little hut is as warm and cosy—warmer and cosier, indeed—as if it were roofed with wood and slates.

Highland Crofters: How They Live

Then he has to think of fire and food. Here, again, he must make the most of the things that lie within his reach. He cannot afford to buy coal, and if he could, he is too far from a railway-station for it to be easy for him to cart it home, but all around him are patches of ground where the soil is black and stringy, almost as if it were full of the dried roots of heather, and he knows that if he cuts out this turfy soil in blocks, and dries it, it makes splendid fires.

So one bright summer day he and his whole family set out to cut their winter's store of peats, as these blocks are called.

If you saw the procession you might think that they were setting out for a picnic; and so they are, only it is a picnic combined with a work-party.

The father carries a couple of spades, the mother carries a basket full of provisions, and the children bring up the rear with a load of last year's peat in their arms.

When they arrive at the special patch of peat-bog which has been selected, the father begins to work at once, cutting the turf in little blocks about a foot long, while the mother and children kindle a fire with the dried peats, so that the kettle may be boiling when dinner-time comes.

Then they begin to collect the peats which have been cut, and lay them on their sides in rows, in order to let the moisture run out of them, and when they go home at night they leave them there, so that for the next few days they may dry in the sun. After that they are piled in small heaps, and, at last, when they

Peeps at Many Lands

are thoroughly dry, they are carted home, and built into a huge stack at the end of the cottage, to serve for firewood during the coming winter.

The fire in a crofter's hut rarely goes out, for, if they are covered with ashes, peats smoulder so slowly it is quite easy to keep them burning constantly.

The fire is made up at bedtime by raking the ashes out, laying on fresh peats, and then piling the ashes on the top. Then it smoulders all night, and in the morning the housewife has only to rake back the ashes and fan the glowing peats, and she soon has a cheerful blaze.

In the olden days there was a very pretty custom connected with this "making-up" of the fire for the night. When the ashes had been raked out, three peats were laid on the glowing embers, one for each Person of the Trinity; then the ashes were heaped over them, and the following words were said :

"The Sacred Three
To shield, to surround,
This hearth, this home, this household,
This night, and every single night."

And although this custom is not commonly observed now, I think the old people who used to repeat these words must have felt happier and safer for having done so, when they lay down to rest; for, although they sound quaint and almost unmeaning, they were just a prayer that the Holy Trinity would protect the inmates of the cottage from all dangers which might threaten them during the hours of darkness.

Highland Crofters: How They Live

For food the crofter has to depend largely on what he can grow on his tiny croft. Potatoes are a common dish in his cottage, and they make a very nice supper indeed, boiled in their skins in the black three-legged pot, with plenty of fresh milk to drink along with them.

Then, as long as there is oatmeal in the house, crisp oatcakes are never wanting. There is also home-made butter and home-laid eggs, although I am afraid most of the eggs are saved up and sold to the carrier when he passes the door, on his weekly or fortnightly round.

Butcher's meat is not a common luxury in these little homes, for the crofts are too tiny to allow very many sheep to be grazed on them, and the crofter prefers to turn them into silver shillings rather than into mutton. But although he sells the sheep, he does not sell the wool which he shears from their backs before he takes them to market, for his wife knows how to spin, and after the wool is spun into yarn she knits it into stockings for the household, or the crofter himself weaves it into rough home-made cloth.

If his hut be anywhere near the sea the crofter is a fisherman as well as a shepherd, and the herring which he catches are a welcome addition to the household provender; and if potatoes and milk form the family supper, potatoes and herring very often form the family dinner.

There used to be an industry carried on in the West Highlands which gave employment to great numbers of these poor people. This was kelp-burning. Kelp is a

Peeps at Many Lands

substance made from burned seaweed, which was largely used in chemical industries, therefore there was a great demand for it.

The seaweed was gathered and dried, then long trenches were dug in the ground and filled with it; then it was set on fire, and covered over with fresh seaweed and stones to keep in the heat. At the end of twenty-four hours this covering was removed, and the burned seaweed was found to have formed a solid material, which was broken in pieces and put on board ships which conveyed it to the mainland, where it was used in the manufacture of glass, iodine, etc.

It has been discovered, however, that another chemical substance, which is cheaper than kelp, can be used instead of it, so there is not much demand for it nowadays, and most of the poor kelp-burners have been thrown out of employment.

CHAPTER XII

SCOTTISH HOME INDUSTRIES

WHEN the kelp industry, about which I told you in the last chapter, failed, you can fancy what distress there was in many a crofter's hut: for it meant that the wages, which had hitherto been earned, were stopped, and there seemed nothing else that the people could turn their hands to.

So they grew listless, and hopeless, as people are

Scottish Home Industries

apt to become when they have not enough work to do.

This greatly distressed a number of kind ladies and gentlemen who owned large estates up in the Highlands and Islands, and they put their heads together to see what could be done to help their poor neighbours.

If you want to see what they did to help them, go, if you have the chance, to the depot of the Scottish Home Industries Association in Edinburgh or London.

There you will see offered for sale great bales of tweed, woven in pretty colours, which would make charming and useful coats or dresses; heaps of hand-knitted stockings and fancy Shetland shawls; piles of creels and brushes of all shapes and sizes, and beautifully carved tables, trays, etc.

It looks like a bazaar, and you can hardly believe it when you are told that all these dainty articles were made in the crofters' little huts far away in the Highlands.

And yet it is true. The ladies and gentlemen I spoke of knew that the crofters' wives had always been in the habit of spinning the wool which came from the backs of their little flocks of sheep into rough woollen cloth, which they made into garments for their households, and as they knew also that this cloth would "turn the rain" in a marvellous manner, and prevent its wearer ever getting really wet, they began to wonder if it would not be possible to teach the crofters to dye the wool some prettier colours, and to weave the cloth a little more evenly, so that the people who could afford

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to do so might buy it instead of buying cloth that had been manufactured in mills, and which is often not made of such good material.

So they set to work and encouraged the crofters to take more care over their spinning and weaving, and they found out all about native dyes—that is, the dyes that can be produced from the common plants which grow on the moors round about the Highland cottages.

For there are many plants the roots or leaves of which produce beautiful soft colours when they are boiled, as those of you know who have tried to dye Easter eggs with lichen from a wall.

Then, when the spinning-wheels and old hand-loom were whirring merrily in the huts once more, these ladies formed themselves into an association, and they told their fashionable friends about this wonderful “Harris tweed,” as it was called (because most of it was made at first in the island of Harris), which was all hand-made, hand-spun, hand-dyed, and hand-woven, and persuaded them to buy some, and have coats and skirts and cloaks made of it. People soon found out how warm and light and durable this Harris tweed is, and orders flowed in so rapidly that by and by shops were opened in Edinburgh and London, and now thousands of pounds’ worth of tweed is sold every year, and instead of sitting listlessly over their peat fires, the crofters and their families are as busy as bees all the long dark winter days.

Would you like to know how they manage to turn the soft fleeces of wool, which they get from the backs



A HIGHLAND CROFTER IN HIS HUT PAGE 42.

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or a small note, located in the center of the page. The text is faint and difficult to decipher.

Scottish Home Industries

of their little shaggy sheep, into bales of tweed without sending it to a factory?

Well, to begin with, the wool is washed over and over again with very hot water, until all the grease and dirt has been washed out of it ; then it is dyed.

If she wants her yarn to be black, the crofter's wife sends her children out to dig up iris roots, or the roots of the common dock. If she wants it to be drab, she sends them to the hill-side to peel some bark from the trunk of a birch-tree. If green is the colour she desires, she sends them to pick some heather which is almost ready to blossom. If she wants brown, they must pick some yellow lichen off the nearest stone wall ; while an apronful of bracken roots will produce a nice soft yellow dye.

When the children have brought her the special plant or root she wants, she hangs an enormous pot on the fire, and puts the wool and the plant or root into it, and covers them with water, and boils them together hour after hour, stirring them occasionally, until the wool is just the shade she wishes it to be.

After this it is dried, then it is "carded"—that is, it is combed with things like hair-brushes, which have metal teeth instead of bristles, until the hairs are all separated and lying in soft rolls. This is a bit of the work in which the children can take part, and they soon become wonderfully clever at it.

Then it is spun into yarn, and finally it is woven into cloth, generally by the crofter himself, on the great hand-loom which occupies one end of the family living-room.

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And do you know what the wool picks up during this long process, and never lets go? Why, the smell of peat reek, to be sure. It gets it from the peat fire which is almost always smouldering.

Go into any Scottish Home Industries Association shop in a crowded city street, and shut your eyes, and in a moment you can fancy yourself within reach of the peats on a crofter's fire.

But the ladies who formed this Association did not rest content with helping the people to improve their weaving. They brought teachers from Edinburgh and Glasgow, and had them taught how to make baskets and herring creels out of hazel or willow wands, and how to make chairs, woven something like beehives, out of the coarse dry "bent"* which they could gather on the hill-sides, and how to do wood-carving and metal-work.

And they encouraged the women up in Shetland, who are such clever knitters, to knit stockings and Shetland shawls. In short, there is no end to the useful and pretty things which are made in the houses of the Scottish crofters.

* Dry grass.

The Girls who Cure Herring

CHAPTER XIII

THE GIRLS WHO CURE HERRING

BUT while a great many of the women and girls in the Highlands and Islands are busy knitting, and spinning, and weaving at home, so as to earn a little money, others go away for long months at a time, travelling in bands from place to place, and often living in very uncomfortable quarters, in order to pursue their trade.

And do you know what that trade is? Herring-curing.

When you have been at the seaside I am sure you have often watched the herring-boats going out in the evening with their brown sails set, and when they have returned next morning you have perhaps walked down to the quay, and have seen the heaps of silvery herring lying in their holds, and have watched them being shovelled into baskets and taken on shore.

There are so many of these fish caught that they cannot all be eaten fresh, so a great number of them are "cured"—that is, they are put in barrels and covered with salt, and this preserves them, so that they are quite good to eat even after they have been kept a long time.

Probably you will have seen also the herring being packed in the barrels, either out on the quay, or in some shed near by, and if you have, I am sure you must have wondered at the quickness with which the packers do their work.

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This work is done by women or girls, and the great majority of them come from the Highlands of Scotland.

Most of you know that herring swim about in shoals, and that these shoals travel round our coasts, being at one place at one time of year, and at another place at another.

And in order to catch them and let us have a supply of fresh herring nearly all the year round, the herring-boats follow the herring, and the herring-girls follow the herring-boats.

The Scottish herring-fishing begins early in April or May, and then the boats sail about among the Western Islands, and a few of the herring-girls leave their homes and go to Stornoway, which, as you know, is the capital of Lewis, to cure the first of the season's fish.

As summer advances, the herring-shoals swim slowly round the North of Scotland, and more and more girls are needed as the boats put in with their loads, first at Orkney and Shetland, then at Wick, then right down the east coast, at Aberdeen and Fraserburgh.

Fraserburgh is the principal centre for herring-curing in Scotland, then comes Peterhead, then Aberdeen. At Fraserburgh, in July and August, as many as 6,000 of these women and girls are gathered together. They come from all parts—from the bare Western Islands, from Orkney and Shetland, and from the North of Scotland.

It must be a great change for them to come from their lonely little cottages to these great bustling

The Girls who Cure Herring

towns, and yet I expect that they enjoy it ; for, as I said, they travel in bands, so they always know other women who come from the same districts as themselves, and even if they do not, they make friends among the women they work with, for the same curers go back to the same towns year after year.

It must seem like going to the seaside for months together, and I am sure they often look forward to their summer's work when they are sitting in their cottage homes in the dark winter days.

But although I have no doubt it is like a summer holiday to them, they have to work very hard, and they have very curious places to live in.

If we were to take a walk down to the harbour of one of these towns in the herring season, after the boats have come in with their night's "catch," we would see a busy scene.

The women would be hard at work, either in the open air or in long open sheds, packing the herring into barrels.

They work in groups of three, and each of these groups is called a "crew." The first woman in the crew cleans the herring, the second picks them out according to their size, and the third lays them in even layers in a barrel which stands before her, and sprinkles each layer with salt. As we watch their nimble fingers working "like lightning," as the saying is, we wonder how they manage to work so quickly and yet rarely drop a herring or make a mistake.

As we come out of the shed we see a ladder which leads up to a place that looks like a loft, and were it

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not for the stove-funnel which sticks out of the roof we might think that empty barrels, or something of that sort, were kept there.

But if we take the trouble to climb up the ladder we shall find that a great many of the women live in these lofts, often fifteen or twenty of them together. At the end of the long low room is the stove where they cook their food, and down each side are two rows of wooden bedsteads, or bunks, one above the other, just like the berths in a ship's cabin.

In front of each bed stands a wooden chest, or "kist," which serves its owner as wardrobe, table, or chair, according to her needs at the moment.

You smile when I say "wardrobe," but I can assure you those Highland girls are as fond of finery as anyone else, and although they wear long fishing-boots and oilskin jackets when they are at work, they look quite different, and not nearly so picturesque, on Sundays, when they open their kists and get out their fashionable hats, and white starched petticoats.

Many of these herring-girls do not end their travels at Aberdeen, but follow the herring further south to Scarborough, and Yarmouth, and Lowestoft, and they do not get back to their Highland homes until far on in the year—until October or November.

You can fancy what excitement there is in the lonely little cottages when they return with the store of money which they have earned, and how all the neighbours will gather together in the long winter evenings to hear the stories they have to tell of the far-away towns which they have seen.

Grouse-Shooting

CHAPTER XIV

GROUSE-SHOOTING

THERE is a well-known Scotch song which says :

“ Hurrah, hurrah ! for my heather hills,
Where the bonnie thistle waves to the sweet bluebells ;”

and this gives us a very good picture of the greater part of the Highlands. For, instead of being covered with grass, the slopes of the hill-sides and the wide-spreading moors are very often covered with heather and bracken, amongst which the delicate little harebells—the bluebells of Scotland—nod their fairylike heads in the wind, and the prickly thistle, Scotland’s badge, lifts its stately flowers, like crowns, to the sky. You can imagine how beautiful the hilly country looks in August and September, when the dark-green brackens are turning to brown and gold, and the heather is in blossom, making everything look as though a great purple pall were thrown over it.

There is grass growing amongst this heather, but it is apt to be choked, so that such ground is not much good for sheep-grazing, and a hundred years ago it was of little value to its owners, who used to be called contemptuously “heather lairds,” because nothing grew on their lands but heather.

But if sheep did not thrive on heather, something else did. For these hills and moors were swarming with dark brown birds which the country-folk called

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“moor-fowl,” but which are better known nowadays by their proper name of “grouse”; and these birds were wonderfully good to eat, and grew fat and plump simply by living on the tender green shoots of the heather.

The lairds and their friends used to shoot these birds for their own use, but they would have laughed if anyone had told them that they were of any value, and had suggested to them that it would be worth their while to shoot large quantities of them and send them in hampers to be sold in London, or Glasgow, or Edinburgh.

Then all at once people woke up to the fact that this was true. People in the cities began to ask their poulterers for Scottish moor-fowl, and were ready to pay good prices for them; and rich men from the South who were fond of shooting began to think it would be worth their while to go to the Highlands for their holidays, and pay some of these Highland lairds a large sum of money for the right to shoot over their moors.

And so it came about that a great change took place in the Highlands. The lairds to whom these moors belonged suddenly found out that the brown moor-fowl, of which they had thought so little, were really quite valuable, and that every year people were willing to pay larger and larger sums of money for the “shooting,” as it is called. And they did not only let their moors, but they began to let their houses as well, and nowadays a great army of rich people go from the South to the Highlands every autumn, and take possession of lonely houses that have very likely stood empty





"CLIPPING TIME." PAGE 82.

Grouse-Shooting

all through the winter, and spring, and summer; and they bring their servants with them, and fill these houses with visitors; and, of course, they must all be fed, and that means more business and more money for the shopkeepers in the little villages, and for the carriers who come with their carts from the nearest towns.

Then these rich people need men to help to dig their gardens, and look after their horses, and men to carry their guns when they go out shooting, and boatmen to row them on the lochs. So you can quite well see how much prosperity has come to the Highlands with the people who go there for the shooting.

And do you know who helped more than anyone else to bring about this change? Sir Walter Scott, the "Wizard of the North," as he has been called. When he began to write his wonderful stories, and people read about the Highlands in "Rob Roy" and "Waverley," above all, when they read "The Lady of the Lake," they made up their minds they would go and see this beautiful country for themselves; for before Sir Walter's day very few people ever thought of visiting the Highlands, because the roads were so rough and the inns were so bad.

When once they began to go there, they were so delighted with what they saw, that they went home and told every one what lovely scenery was to be found in the North, and what good shooting they had had, and how the rivers were full of salmon; and little by little the Highlands became a great holiday resort for people from the Lowlands and England.

If you happened to be in London a few days before the

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12th of August (when the grouse-shooting begins), and went down to one of the three railway-stations from which you can travel to Scotland—St. Pancras, Euston, or King's Cross—you would have proof of this.

You would see long, heavy trains standing ready to start, labelled "Through Train to Aberdeen," or "Perth," or "Inverness," and you would see how crowded these trains were. All the seats are booked days beforehand, and if you had not booked a seat also, you would have little chance of getting one if you wished it.

If you stood and watched the people you would see whole families setting out—fathers and mothers, grown-up sons and daughters, schoolroom boys and girls, and children with their nurses; besides which, there would be compartments filled with servants, and great vans piled up with luggage, and, from the gun-cases, and fishing-rods, and bicycles, you could tell quite easily that those families were going off to take possession of some Highland shooting-lodge for the autumn.

But we are putting the cart before the horse—we are finding out all about the people who shoot the grouse before we find out anything about the grouse themselves.

Six months before the shooters set out for their holiday, Father Grouse, away up on his Highland moor, has begun to look out for a wife. He takes a long time over his courtship, and it is not till the very end of April or the beginning of May that Mother Grouse commences the serious duties of housekeeping by looking about for a suitable place in which to lay

Grouse-Shooting

her eggs. I say a "place" rather than a "nest," for a grouse's nest is simply a hollow in the ground, sometimes in the middle of a tuft of heather, sometimes hidden under a tussock of coarse, dry grass. There she lays her eggs, numbering from six to twelve, and there she sits patiently for seventeen days, while her mate keeps near the nest in order to protect her, as far as he can, from danger. At last one fine morning there is first a feeble tapping, then a chirping, and crackling, and rustling under her wings, and if she were to get off her nest you would see, instead of six, or eight, or ten greenish-grey speckled eggs, six, or eight, or ten of the dearest little birds imaginable.

They are like tiny chickens, only prettier, with fluffy speckled feathers, and the brightest eyes you ever saw. They are cleverer, too, than chickens, these tiny wild moor-fowl, for almost as soon as they are out of their shells they begin to run about, and before they are thirty-six hours old the nest is deserted, and the whole family has set out on its travels, Father Grouse leading the way, with all the little baby grouse following him, and Mother Grouse bringing up the rear, keeping a watchful eye on her children, in case any of them get entangled in a piece of wool, or a specially thick clump of heather.

At the slightest sign of danger the whole family crouches flat on the ground, among the roots of the heather if possible, and, when they are hiding like this, it would take a very sharp eye to see them, for their reddy-brown plumage tones in so well with the surrounding heather that they are almost invisible.

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In a very short time indeed the "cheepers," as the young birds are called, learn to fly, and through the long summer days the family lives a sort of picnicky life, always keeping together, and with no anxiety about food, for there is always heather to be had, and in their travels, as summer goes on, they occasionally come across a cornfield, where they can feast undisturbed to their hearts' content.

They get to know every inch of the moor they live on;—where the tenderest shoots of heather grow, and where the little "burns" are, which run through tiny ravines overgrown with bracken, under whose shady leaves they can take refuge from the sun when it is too hot to be out in the open.

But these peaceful days do not last for ever. Perhaps the grouse, being sporting birds, do not wish that they should. The long, heavy trains come rolling up to the North, and the shooting-lodges are filled, and the quiet country roads grow busy with brakes, and dogcarts, and motor-cars. And at last the morning of "the Twelfth" dawns, and eager parties of men and dogs set out in all directions over the moors. Suddenly one of the dogs stands stock still, with its eyes fixed, almost as if it were turned to stone. It has sighted the grouse family, the "covey," as it is now called.

Old Father Grouse has also sighted the dog, and he crouches close to the ground, and creeps away noiselessly through the heather with his wife and family at his back.

But the dog moves slowly after them, and at last,

Deer-Stalking

seeing that there is no other way of escape, the covey rises on the wing.

Snap! bang! puff! go the guns, and I am afraid that when Father and Mother Grouse settle down breathlessly among the heather on the other side of the moor, having put a good mile between the shooters and themselves, and begin to count their grown-up sons and daughters, they will find that their family is smaller than it was when they left their resting-place in the morning.

CHAPTER XV

DEER-STALKING

You have all heard of a deer-forest, and I expect the word brings a picture to your mind of a great stretch of woodland, with spreading trees and patches of tall bracken, among which the deer lie, as you may have seen them lying in some nobleman's park.

But a deer-forest is quite different from that. Strange as it may seem, there are hardly any trees growing in it at all. It is simply a great expanse of wild, uncultivated ground, often very mountainous, and extending for many miles.

And, like the grouse-moors, these deer-forests are quite as valuable to their owners as if they were the finest pasture-land; for if they do not wish to stalk the deer on them themselves, they can let them, and they often get thousands of pounds of rent from some rich

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man who can afford to pay for this very expensive sport.

Most of these deer-forests lie in the counties of Argyle, Inverness, Ross, or Sutherland, and some of them cover enormous stretches of country, the largest of them measuring over 80,000 acres.

Did you ever wonder why people talk of "stalking" deer instead of "hunting" them?

If you look up the dictionary you will find that "to stalk" means "to walk with long, slow steps," "to approach secretly in order to attack," and this is just what sportsmen have to do when they set out to hunt deer in the Highlands.

The country is so mountainous, and there are so many precipices, that they cannot set out to chase the animals with horses and hounds as they do in the South-West of England, on Exmoor, or as used to be done on the Borders of Scotland when the country was not so cultivated as it is nowadays, and wild deer were to be found there.

We read how the Stuart Kings used to go with horse and hounds to hunt the deer in Meggatland, Eskdalemuir, and Ettrick Forest. Mary Queen of Scots was very fond of the pastime, and she once came to the Borders with her husband, Darnley, in order to chase the red-deer, and was sadly disappointed to find that the country-folk had been hunting before her, and that there were very few deer left to chase. So a Privy Council was held at Rodono, near St. Mary's Loch, in Selkirkshire, and a decree was passed which commanded all the Queen's loyal subjects to abstain from killing

Deer-Stalking

the deer, because "our Sovereigns can get no pastime now, although they repair to the Border for that effect."

The sportsmen in the Highlands have to go after the deer on foot, and try to get near enough to them to shoot them, which is a very difficult thing to do; for the deer are so wild that they will turn and fly if they hear the slightest noise, and their scent is so keen that they can scent a human being when he is half a mile away, if the wind is in the right direction. So you can understand that it is no easy matter to stalk deer.

To begin with, they have to be found, and the sportsmen have often to walk many a weary mile before they catch a glimpse of a group of deer at all. When they do, the excitement begins.

The deer may be on the shoulder of a hill a couple of miles away, and their pursuers have to play a game of hide-and-seek in order to get near them.

The first thing to do is to disappear as quickly as possible, in case the deer's keen eyes should see them. Then they must try to get round the back of the hill, or up some hidden valley, which will bring them nearer the animals, taking care all the time not to talk loudly, in case their quick ears hear the sound of their voices, and not to walk in a direction from which the wind will blow straight from them to the deer, in case their sharp noses tell them that there are human beings somewhere in the neighbourhood.

If any of these things happen, the swift-footed animals toss their antlers in the air and go off like the

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wind, and the disappointed sportsmen may have to walk for hours before they come in sight of them again.

A baby deer is a lovely little creature, with a tawny coat, and great soft eyes. After it is a day or two old its mother does not stay beside it constantly, but makes it lie down in the nice dry heather by pressing it with her nose, and when the docile little creature has curled itself up like a dog, with its nose against its tail, she leaves it alone for hours. But she keeps within reach, and always takes care to be on the windward side of it, so that if a fox or a polecat should come stealing up, eager to have a nice tender meal, she scents them at once, and comes bounding up to protect her baby.

As the little deer grows bigger it is called a "calf," and when it is old enough, and strong enough, it joins the herd, and soon learns to take care of itself.

CHAPTER XVI

SALMON-FISHING

IF you ever happen to travel from England to Scotland by the East Coast route, you will cross the Tweed at Berwick, and if you look out of the train as it rumbles across the high railway-bridge which spans the river, you will most likely see, far below you, a little group of fishermen pulling a net out of the water. Indeed, if you have the good luck to be crossing the bridge just at the right moment, you may see the end of the



SALMON FISHING.

Salmon-Fishing

net being pulled to the bank, and in it there may be six or seven great silvery fish, some of them almost a yard long.

For these men are salmon fishermen, and the salmon which they catch well deserve the name of "king of fresh-water fish," which was given to them many years ago by an old Englishman named Izaak Walton, who was a great fisher, and who wrote a book all about fishing ; for they are good to look at, and good to eat, and good to sell.

Indeed, the sale of the silvery salmon, which are so plentiful in all her large rivers, has been a source of prosperity to Scotland from the earliest days. So far back as seven hundred years ago people used to fish in the Dee and the Tay for these enormous fish, and, when they had caught them, they salted them, and took them across the sea to Flanders, and Holland, and Normandy, and exchanged them for fine Flemish cloth, and wine from the French vineyards.

And besides supplying the Scottish people with these luxuries from abroad, this useful fish formed a large portion of the food of the country-folk at home. It seems strange to us nowadays, when salmon is a dainty, and can only be bought by people who are able to pay a good price for it, to read about the times when every one salted a stock of it for winter use, and servants and apprentices, who always lived in their masters' houses, used to make a bargain, when they were engaged, that they would not have salmon for dinner more than three times a week.

The Kings of Scotland were well aware of the value
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of these beautiful fish, which were hatched in the rivers, then went away to the sea for a time, and returned when they were full-grown, and they made laws in order to preserve them.

They knew that, if too many were caught at once, the supply would soon run short, and we read of one very quaint law which was made almost seven hundred years ago, in the reign of Alexander II.—that every week there should be what was called a “Saturday slap.” That meant that no one was to fish for salmon from Saturday evening till Monday morning.

Perhaps King Alexander thought that as every one had a holiday on Sunday, people might be tempted to go out and fish for themselves, and so too many salmon might be caught.

This is how the quaint old law was worded and spelt :

“The water sould be free, that na man sall take fisch in it, fra Saturday after the Evening Song, until Munday after the sunne rising.”

In 1300, when the English King, Edward I., overran Scotland with his troops after the defeat of John Baliol, he brought with him his “nets and fishers” to catch salmon out of the rivers as they passed, to supply the royal table; and when his son, Edward II., was preparing to invade Scotland in 1322, he ordered the citizens of Berwick to provide several hundred barrels of salmon for the use of his army, all of which shows us that even in those days fishermen fished for salmon in the Scottish rivers, just as they do at the present time.

Salmon-Fishing

It is very interesting to watch a party of fishermen fishing for salmon. They use a long narrow net, with pieces of cork fastened at regular distances along one edge of it, and a rope fastened to each end. They make one of these ropes fast to a windlass on the shore, then they pile the net in a high heap on the end of their little cobble, and row out into the river, or into the sea at the river's mouth.

As the boat glides along, the net slips off into the water, where one edge of it sinks, while the other is kept on the surface by the pieces of cork which are attached to it.

The men row out a certain distance, then come back to the shore, having let down the whole of the net. They bring back the end of the other rope with them, so that they have hold of the two ends of rope, while the net can be traced by the bobbing corks, lying like a half-moon on the water.

They light their pipes, and sit down and smoke for half an hour or so; then they begin to wind in the ropes with the windlass.

Slowly the half-moon of bobbing corks is drawn nearer and nearer, until at last the ends of the net are drawn up on the shingle. Then four or six men step forward, and, seizing the net, haul it in, hand over hand, occasionally bringing in a great salmon, caught by the gills, along with it, until at the end it comes in in a sort of bag, or loop; and, if the catch be a good one, there may be ten, or twelve, or even twenty great silvery fish in it, jumping about in wild confusion in their efforts to get out of the net.

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There is another way of catching salmon, and that is by fishing for them with a rod and line, just as people fish for trout. This is done further up the rivers, where it would not be easy, because of the shallowness of the water, or the rocks in the bottom of the river, to fish from boats.

Fishing for salmon in this way is most exciting, and people often pay large sums of money for permission to go and fish in some piece of water where it is known that good sport is to be had. They rent part of a river in fact, just as other people rent a grouse-moor or a deer-forest.

Perhaps some of you have fished for trout in some little river or moorland stream, and you know how excited you are when whirr! goes your line, and you can feel from the strain on it that you have hooked a trout. You know how careful you are to let him have free play, and not to let your line get entangled in the branches overhead, and how proud you feel when you have got him safely landed.

And you can think how much more exciting it would be, and what a difficult piece of work too, if, instead of hooking a trout which weighs perhaps half a pound, you had hooked a salmon which weighed twenty or thirty pounds, and you had to "play" him up and down a deep, swiftly-flowing river.

You can fancy how your arms would ache with his weight, and how tired you would get, for sometimes a salmon will rush up and down a river for two or three hours, with his captor running up and down the bank after him, before he manages to get him safely to land.

Salmon-Fishing

There is still another way of catching salmon, which used to be practised a great deal, and is still carried on occasionally in out-of-the-way parts of the country, where the rivers are small and shallow enough to wade in; but it is against the law—in fact, it is poaching—and people who are caught doing it may be put in prison. It is what is called “bleezing,” or “burning” the water.

A party of men will steal out some dark night armed with curious iron rods, called “leisters,” which have three sharp prongs at the end of them; and, when they get to a quiet part of a river, where no one is likely to see them, one of them will produce a torch, which he will light. Then they will all wade into the water, and walk slowly up the stream; and, when they come across a salmon lying half buried in the sand at the bottom of the river, or hiding behind some piece of rock, the men with the leisters will spear him by the light of the torch, while he is too confused by the unwonted glare to try to escape.

This is a foolish and cruel way of catching salmon however, because it is generally practised at a time of year when the fish are unfit for food; and, besides, when the men have managed to spear them, they are at a loss what to do with them, as they dare not sell them openly—indeed, they dare not be seen with them in their possession.

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CHAPTER XVII

NATIONAL GAMES

Golf

THERE are two outdoor games which are always thought of as peculiarly Scottish. One is the "royal" game of golf, and the other the "roaring" game of curling.

Perhaps you would like to know why each of these has its distinctive adjective? I will tell you.

Golf became known as the "royal" game because it was a favourite pastime of the old Stuart Kings, and curling is called the "roaring" game because of the curious drawn-out rumbling noise which the curling-stones make as they slip along the ice. This noise can be heard quite a long distance off on a frosty day, and would make anyone who was not accustomed to the sound wonder what was happening.

I think it is hardly worth while trying to describe the game of golf to you, for nowadays it is played everywhere, and there is hardly a town without its golf-course, and I dare say most of you have either played it for yourselves or have watched other people playing it, and you know all about "putting greens" and "bunkers" and "hazards" as well as I do, and could tell exactly what kind of cleek is needed to lift a ball out of long grass, and when to use a club, and when to use an iron.

But for the sake of any child who has never seen

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the game, I may just say that it is played on short tufty grass, with a little hard ball and a set of sticks or clubs, some of which have twisted wooden heads and some have iron ones.

There are tiny holes made here and there in the grass, and flags are placed in them to let the players see where they are, and they drive the balls with their clubs from one hole to another, and the player who sends his ball into all the holes in the fewest strokes wins the game.

Golf-courses are not always on level ground ; indeed, it is better if they are not, for then there are more hazards to be met with—that is, there are more difficult places to drive the ball over, which add greatly to the interest of the game.

For instance, if there are some little hillocks on the course, there is always the chance that, instead of clearing them, the ball will strike the side of the hill and roll back again ; or, if there is a stream to be crossed, the ball may fall into that, and so on ; so the players need to have a great many differently shaped clubs to play with, for it takes one kind of club to lift a ball out of long grass, and another to send it high in the air, and still another to roll it gently along the turf, almost as if one were playing croquet, when it is near a hole.

Golf-clubs are rather heavy, so golfers generally employ a man or a boy to carry them for them, who is called a “caddie,” and these caddies walk behind the players and hand them the different clubs which they need in the course of the game.

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But although golf is played all over England and all over the Colonies nowadays, no one forgets that it came from Scotland, and has been played there for hundreds of years, especially on the East Coast, where the long stretches of sandy grass that run along the sea-shore provided ideal golf-courses or "links."

And it was played so constantly, not only by the nobles, but also by the common people, and so much time was spent over it, that James I., who, as you remember, spent his youth in captivity at far-away Windsor, was quite disturbed when he came back to Scotland, because he feared that his people would learn to be better golfers than fighters. So, as he knew what good bowmen the English archers were, he ordered that Scotch lads should stop playing golf and begin to learn archery "fra they be twelve yeir of age"; and in order that they might have plenty of opportunities to do this, he caused "bow-butts," or targets, to be set up beside every parish kirk.

His son, James II., and his great-grandson, James IV., also tried their best to "cry down golfe" as an "unprofitable sport," but without much success, which is not to be wondered at perhaps, when we find that these Kings were very fond of the game themselves, so they could hardly expect their subjects to give it up while they went on playing it.

After the union of the crowns the Stuart Kings continued to play golf whenever they came to Scotland, and we read how the news of the Irish Rebellion was brought to Charles II. when he was playing golf with his courtiers on Leith Links, and how he dropped his



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clubs and drove back to Edinburgh at once, and left for London immediately.

There is one town which may be called the "golfing capital" of Scotland, and that is St. Andrews.

If you went there, no matter what time of year it was, you would find the links crowded with players from morning to night, and you would notice that a great many of them wore scarlet coats, almost like the coats which gentlemen wear when they are riding to hounds.

These coats make pleasant touches of colour, and they show that their wearers belong to a very old golf club, which has been in existence for more than a hundred and fifty years. It is called "The Ancient and Royal Golf Club of St. Andrews," and its rules are held to be authoritative by golf-players all over the world.

CHAPTER XVIII

NATIONAL GAMES (*continued*)

Curling

If golf were once the game of Kings, and is now played principally by people who have time to spare and a certain amount of money to spend (for people have generally to pay a subscription when they join a golf club), curling is a game in which every one can take part, from the laird up at the "big hoose," to the stonemason and the village tailor, and for this reason every one loves it.

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Let us take a peep one cold, bleak January day into some "far out-bye" little valley.

The hills are white with snow, and the ground is as hard as iron ; but although the wind is cold, the sky is the colour of a sapphire, and down on the square pond, which lies behind the manse, a number of people are gathered together, who are making such a noise and looking so happy that we need not ask them if they are enjoying themselves, or if they do not feel cold.

They are curling, and we will stand still and watch them for a moment.

There are sixteen players altogether, and they are playing in two parties. Each party forms a "rink," as it is called ; so that makes eight players to each rink, and of these eight players, four play on one side and four on the other.

Each player has a couple of curling-stones, which are made out of granite or whin-stone, and they are about the size of a small cheese.

They are polished until they are quite smooth, and in the top of each of them a small handle is fixed.

As you may think, these stones are very heavy. I doubt if you could lift one of them if you tried.

Now that we have looked at the curling-stones, let us look at some of the players. That gentleman over there with the white beard is the laird. He lives up in the big square house on the hill, and he keeps a carriage and pair, and has a motor-car. Those two young men in the light suits are his sons. One is at Oxford reading for his degree, and the other is going

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to be a soldier, so he is at Sandhurst. The fair-haired girl in the red tam-o'-shanter is their sister.

There is another girl playing in the farthest-away rink. She is the minister's daughter from the manse, and there is her father; you can know him at once from his clothes. Her brother is here, too, home for his holidays from Edinburgh, where he is learning to be a doctor.

Then there are three or four other gentlemen, most of them sheep-farmers, who live in the neighbourhood; and there is the country doctor, who has stolen an hour or two from his rounds.

But there are other players here, who are neither lairds, nor soldiers, nor farmers, nor doctors. There is Rob, the moleman, who has come to curl because the ground is too hard for him to catch moles; and Jock, the mason, who cannot go on with his work because his mortar is frozen; and Tom, the game-keeper, and Davie, his son, whom the laird has summoned from their ordinary employments to help to make up the rinks; and there is Andrew Davidson, the tailor, who is the keenest curler in all the countryside, who will gladly sit up all night to sew, if only he can curl all day. For Andrew has another version of the proverb, "Make hay while the sun shines," and that is, "Curl while the frost lasts."

Now let us watch how the game is played. It reminds us somewhat of bowls, does it not? For a player kneels down at one end of the pond, and, swinging his heavy curling-stone in his hand, he half throws, half pushes it along the ice, and away it slides

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towards the other end, where a mark called a "tee" has been made on the ice.

Each player tries to send his stone as near this tee as possible ; for, when all the stones have been thrown up, it is the stones that lie nearest to it that count, and each man tries to do the best he can for his own side.

I say, "for his own side," not "for himself," for curling, like football or hockey, is not a game where every one plays for himself, but for his side.

The best player on each side is chosen as captain, or "skip," as he is called, and he stands near the tee and directs his men where to place their stones. For it is sometimes as important to knock an enemy's stone away, as to place one's own stone near the tee.

Every one, as you see, is armed with a broom, and as the heavy stones come smoothly up the ice the players stand on both sides of the track eagerly watching their progress.

Here comes a stone which seems as if it would stop before it reaches the tee. "Soop her up !" shouts the skip to whose side "she" belongs.

Instantly all the players on that side are working like madmen, running alongside the stone and sweeping every particle of ice or snow out of its way, in order to make its course still smoother, and coax it on until it reaches the tee.

Presently another stone comes up, this time from the enemies' side. It is coming at a good pace, and threatens to fly past the tee. Its owner watches it

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anxiously, hoping that some tiny piece of snow may come in its way and check its speed.

But no such luck. On it comes, steering clear of all the other stones, which lie at various distances, and passes the tee. But its speed is slackening. There is a danger that it may stop abruptly and lie just behind the goal, in which case it might be as near to it as the stones which are lying on the other side.

"Soop!" cries out the victorious skip once more, and a way is swept so clean before it by its enemies, that it moves gently on, until it is quite out of the running, and need no longer be feared.

"But," says some one, as we stand watching the rink nearest us, "Andrew and Rob seem to be the chief men here. How curious! I should have thought that the laird or the minister would have taken the lead."

Ah, but that is just the glory of the old Scotch game.

Andrew and Rob are the best players. They know to a nicety exactly where each stone should lie, and how much strength will be needed to knock an opponent's stone out of its place, so they are chosen to be skips, and Sir Ronald and Mr. MacGregor are quite content to obey them and follow their advice. And when Andrew shouts sternly, "She wants legs, Sir Ronald; can ye no' play a bit stronger?" the laird takes the rebuke quite meekly, and runs himself with his broom to "soop her up"; while as for Mr. MacGregor, he avoids Rob's angry eye when his stone, with which Rob had asked him to knock away one of

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the laird's, goes quite wide of the mark, and flies harmlessly into the bank.

Andrew and Rob mean no disrespect, and the laird and the minister know it. And they know, too, that when the frost has lasted long enough to allow a "bonspiel"* to be played on some big loch like Loch Lomond, and they would fain send a rink from their quiet little valley to compete with the others, it is Andrew or Rob to whom they must look for that rink's success, and they will obey their orders as meekly on the ice of Loch Lomond, as they are doing now on their own little pond.

Ay, and when a rink wishes to go further afield and take part in the great "bonspiels" which take place every winter on the frozen lakes high up in the Alps in Switzerland, it is no uncommon thing for the laird and his friends to pay Rob or Andrew's expenses, if one of them will consent to go with them and lead them to victory in "foreign parts."

CHAPTER XIX

SHEPHERDS AND THEIR DOGS

I WONDER how many of the children who read this little book have known a Scottish shepherd?

I do not mean merely how many of you have known

* A curling tournament.

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a shepherd by sight, but how many of you have known one as a friend, have walked over the hills with him when he has been gathering his sheep, and have helped him to "drive twins" from one field to another in "lambing time," when each silly mother has a couple of long-legged lambs to look after, and insists first of all in losing them, then in running after some other sheep's lambs, under the impression that they are her own.

If any of you have spent long afternoons out on the hills in this way you are very lucky, for you will have learned a great deal about Nature—about animals and how to treat them, about birds and where and when they make their nests, and about the weather: what signs show that it is going to be a fine day to-morrow, and what signs show that it will rain.

You may not be aware that you have learned these things, but you have, all the same; for a shepherd spends all his time in the open air, and knows about them, and you cannot talk to him without learning something about them too.

There is an old friend of mine whom I wish you all knew. He is a shepherd, and his name is Robbie. He has a kind face and a long silvery beard, and when he is walking about among his sheep, with a lamb in his arm, and his shepherd's crook in his hand, he makes one think of the pictures of the Good Shepherd, only one does not think of the Good Shepherd as an old man.

Robbie has taken care of sheep all his life. He began to be a herd laddie when he left school, and he

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has seen many changes in the long years that have gone by since then.

Nowadays when sheep and lambs are sold they are taken to the nearest market, and then, if the distance is too great for them to travel to their new quarters in a day, or a couple of days, they are taken to the station and put into trucks, and taken long distances by train. But Robbie remembers, when he was a lad, seeing great droves of sheep being driven slowly along certain paths (which are called "drove-roads") through the Border hills, accompanied by six or eight shepherds ; and when he asked these men where they came from, he found that they had come with their flocks from the Highlands, and that they were driving them over the Border and down into England, and that they expected to be a month, or five weeks, on the road.

These Highland shepherds were hardy men, for Robbie remembers how they each carried a bag of oatmeal, and how, when night fell, if they were near no cottage, they simply made themselves "crowdy," by mixing a handful of oatmeal with a little cold water, and when they had eaten that, they wrapped themselves in their plaids and lay down to pass the night on the hill-side beside their sheep.

But although shepherds nowadays have not to take journeys like that, they have a hard and anxious life, and have to brave all kinds of weather in the fulfilment of their duty.

When a very bad snowstorm comes on, and every one else is glad to stay indoors, Robbie and his friends have to face the driving snow in order to see that their



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flocks are in a place of safety, and next morning, when the wind has gone down and the snow is no longer falling, they must be early astir in order to see if any sheep have been buried in the snowdrifts, and to carry food to the whole flock if the snow is too deep to allow them to get at the grass.

When spring comes the lambs arrive, and then the shepherds are busy all day and half the night as well. For they get up very early, often before it is light, and go out with lanterns to see that all the little lambs are comfortable, and that none of them are perishing for want of food or shelter. And they go up and down among them the live-long day, carrying flasks of hot milk in order to give the weaklings an extra drink, or bring orphans up "by hand."

But they try not to have many orphans. There are mothers whose lambs have died, and there are lambs whose mothers have died, and Robbie tries to make the lambless mothers adopt the motherless lambs. This sounds quite an easy matter, but I can assure you that it is not ; for every sheep knows its own lamb, not by sight, but by smell, and if Robbie were to put down a strange lamb at a sheep's side in the hope that she would accept it at once, he would certainly be disappointed. The sheep would sniff the lamb for a moment, then she would butt it away with all her might, no matter how the poor little thing "baa'd."

No, Robbie is wiser than that. He takes the dead lamb's skin and he ties it on the little orphan as tightly as he can, and then he sets it down, a comical little figure, beside the dead lamb's mother. And the trick

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succeeds. The sheep sniffs the new-comer and is satisfied, and lets the little creature nestle close to her at once.

No sooner are the lambs fairly big and able to look after themselves than another busy time comes on for careful shepherds. It is drawing near "clipping time," or, as they would say in England, "sheep-shearing time," and the sheep's fleeces are getting so thick and heavy that if one of them chances to roll on its back it cannot get up again, but will lie with its feet in the air until it dies.

When a sheep gets on its back like this it is said to be "awelled," and if ever you are going over the hills in early summer and see a sheep lying on its back with its legs in the air, if you have the pluck to go and push it over on its side, so that it can get up, you will probably have saved its life.

When there is a risk of sheep awelling, a shepherd will "look his hirsle"—that is, walk all over the ground where his sheep are feeding—three times a day, and this means a great deal of walking, for he must do his work so thoroughly that, when he has finished, he has looked into every hollow where a sheep could possibly be hidden.

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CHAPTER XX

SHEPHERDS AND THEIR DOGS (*continued*)

BEFORE the clipping comes on, the sheep must be washed, in order that their wool may be as clean as possible when it is taken off.

Each sheep is not washed separately—that would take too much time—but they are driven, one by one, into a deep pool, across which they must swim before they can get out, and in doing so their wool is cleansed.

The clipping day is a busy day on a sheep-farm. All the shepherds in the neighbourhood come to help, for if a shepherd had to shear his flock single-handed, it would take him weeks to do so. So his neighbours come to help him, and he, in his turn, goes to help them.

The sheep are separated from their lambs, and shut up in railed enclosures. Then, as they are wanted, they are caught and taken out, one by one, to the clippers, who kneel on the grass, each with a sheep in front of him. These clippers are wonderfully clever with their shears. Snip! snip! snip! they go, and gradually the sheep's fleece falls off, and lies on the grass like a great soft rug of wool, leaving the sheep, whose legs are strapped, lying in the middle of it, looking very white and very small.

“Buist!” calls out the clipper; and a boy who has been standing beside a fire, over which hangs a pot of boiling tar, dips an iron rod with two letters on the

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end of it into the liquid, and runs and presses it against the white shorn side of the sheep.

In an instant its owner's name is stamped upon it in staring black letters; then the straps are taken off its legs, and away it goes, with a bound of delight, to join its companions who have already passed through the same ordeal, and to seek its lambs, who are wandering desolately about, looking for it.

A couple of girls come running up to pick up the fleece which it has left behind it. They stretch it on a low board, almost like a table, and roll it into a neat roll, after which they toss it aside on to a heap of other fleeces which are rolled up in the same way.

Presently an enormous bag, made of sacking, will be slung up between two high posts, and a man will jump into it, and the girls will hand him up the rolls of wool, and he will pack them into the bag, stamping them down with his feet until it is quite full; then it is sewn up with twine, and set aside with other bags, to be sent, later on, to the manufacturer, who will spin it into yarn; then it will be made into cloth, or hosiery, or nice warm blankets.

Some six weeks after the clipping comes a very distressing day, when all the lambs are taken from their mothers and driven off to market, to face the world on their own account. Then the air resounds with a dismal chorus of "Baa, baa's" as the poor sheep go bleating about, calling for their children.

After this, for the next few months, a shepherd's work is comparatively easy, for sheep do not need much attention in the winter-time; but with the spring the

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lambs come once more, and the year's round of work begins over again.

We cannot think of Scottish shepherds without thinking of Scottish sheep-dogs—collies, as we call them—for a shepherd would be absolutely helpless without his dogs, who are so well trained, and so intelligent, that they obey every movement of his hand, as well as every word he utters, in such a clever way that we feel, as we watch them, that they know almost as much about sheep as he does.

This knowledge comes by what we call instinct—that is, it is born in them, and when a collie is quite young—only about seven or eight months old—it begins of its own accord to try and help its master with his sheep.

If it is out with him when he is driving a flock of sheep, and one of them tries to break away from the rest, it will run boldly forward and bark in her face, as if it knew that she is doing wrong.

When the shepherd sees this, he does all he can to encourage the dog, talking to it gently, and trying, by word and gesture, to show it what he wants it to do.

If, for instance, he wishes it to gather together all the sheep that are on a certain hill, he points to the hill and says, "Come, here, away, out-by, wide"—at least, that is what Robbie says to his dog Toss, and Toss sets off up the hill-side, and in a very short time he has gathered all the scattered sheep into a group, and stands waiting for further orders. Then, if Robbie wants the sheep brought towards him, he makes a sign with his hand, and Toss obeys.

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If Robbie chances to be driving his sheep along a road, and he comes to a place where another road joins it, he knows that half his flock will probably turn down that way. He does not wish them to do this, so he makes a sign to Toss, who is walking soberly at his heels. Toss understands what is wanted, and in a moment he is over the wall, and flying along the field on the other side of it, so as to get in front of the sheep; and when the place where the two ways meet is reached, he is standing guarding the one down which the sheep are not to go.

Sometimes, at agricultural shows, there are "dog trials," in order to see which collie can manage sheep most cleverly. And do you know what the test often is? Four sheep are put into a field which has a small enclosure in the middle of it. The gate of this enclosure is left open, and each dog in turn is expected, under the direction of its master, to drive three of these sheep into the enclosure, and to keep the fourth one, who, naturally, wants to follow its companions, out.

The dog who does this in the shortest time and with fewest mistakes wins the prize; and considering that their masters are not allowed to help them in any way except by making signs to them, and giving them orders, I think it is a wonderful feat for any dog to accomplish.

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